

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 04123 151648Z
ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 NSF-01 COME-00 PM-05 DODE-00
/024 W

-----121241 160342Z /72

R 151241Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 224

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E. 11652: NA
TAGS: TOCY, OCLR, TGEN, IN
SUBJECT: RESEARCH VESSEL CLERANCE REQUEST

REF: (A) STATE 058024; (B) NEW DELHI 2948; (C) STATE A-579;
(D) NEW DELHI 3454

1. WE WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY POINTS MADE IN PARA 1 OF REFERENCE A.
THE PROCEDURE WHEREBY EMBASSY SUBMITS NOTE TO MINISTRY OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS FOR VESSEL CLEARANCE HAS NOT RESULTED IN A
POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

2. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH DR. R.D.
DESHPANDE, DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION, DEPARTMENT
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, THAT BY FAR THE BEST CHANCE OF
OBTAINING GOI CLEARANCE IS IF PART OF THE CRUISE IS SHOWN
AS A JOINT PROJECT BETWEEN INDIAN AND US INSTITUTIONS. THIS SHOULD
NOT BE DIFFICULT BECAUSE IN ALMOST ALL PREVIOUS CASES THE US
SIDE INVITED INDIAN OCEANOGRAPHERS TO BEABOARD ESPECIALLY WHEN
THE SHIP WAS IN OR NEAR INDIAN WATERS, THE INDIAN SCIENTISTS
WERE OFFERED RAW AND REDUCED DATA FOR THAT PART OF THE CRUISE.
US SCIENTISTS SHOULD TRY AND FIND COLLABORATORS AMONG
INDIAN SCIENTISTS WHO WOULD BE PREPARED TO WRITE SUCH
A JOINT PROPOSAL. IT SHOULD INCLUDE INDIAN SCIENTISTS BEING
ON BOARD FOR THAT PART OF THE CRUISE, SHARING THE DATA DURING
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THAT PERIOD AND REDUCTION OF THAT DATA JOINTLY OR INDIVIDUALLY
TO MUTUAL ADVANTAGE. WRITING OF THIS PROPOSAL
WOULD BE INDICATIVE TO THE GOI OF INDIAN SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
IN SUCH A CRUISE. THE INDIAN SCIENTIST SHOULD SUBMIT THE
PROPOSAL TO THE GOI DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.
COPIES OF THE PROPOSAL SHOULD ALSO BE SENT TO THE INDIAN
SCICOUNS IN WASHINGTON AND TO THE SCICOUNS IN NEW DELHI.

THE LATTER COULD PROVIDE THE NECESSARY FOLLOW-UP PARTICULARLY WITH THE DST. SINCE CRUISE PROGRAMS ARE KNOWN MORE THAN A YEAR IN ADVANCE, US SCIENTISTS SHOULD INITIATE CONTACTS ON THE JOINT PROPOSAL RIGHT AT THE OUTSET. LONG LEAD TIME WILL ALSO BE NECESSARY SINCE THE NUMBER OF INDIAN OCEANOGRAPHERS AVAILABLE TO TAKE PART IN CRUISES IS LIMITED. ADDITIONALLY, INDIAN SCIENTISTS ARE ALSO INVOLVED IN THEIR OWN RESEARCH ON INDIAN CRUISE SHIPS AND NEED TO PLAN AHEAD TO BE AVAILABLE FOR BOTH US AND INDIAN CRUISES.

3. THERE IS ONE ENORMOUS ADVANTAGE TO HAVING A US-INDIAN APPROVED PROJECT. THE CLEARANCE OF THE US CRUISE IN INDIAN WATERS IS PART OF THE PROJECT. THE DST WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING THE CLEARANCES. ONCE THE PROJECT IS APPROVED BY THE GOI NO EMBASSY ACTION OR DIPLOMATIC NOTE WILL BE REQUIRED.

4. ONLY IN CASES WHERE SUCH A JOINT PROPOSAL CANNOT BE SUBMITTED, THE EMBASSY SHOULD UNDERTAKE TO APPROACH THE MEA WITH A DIP NOTE TO OBTAIN CLEARANCES ON CRUISE SHIPS. WE FEEL THAT UNTIL THE ISSUE CONFRONTING THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE ARE RESOLVED, CHANCES OF GOI APPROVAL THROUGH THIS PROCEDURE ARE DIM.

5. INFORMATION GOI REQUIRES ON THE CRUISES IS COVERED IN REFTEL D.

6. IN A RECENT DISCUSSION AT THE DST ON THE JOINT WORKSHOP ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OCEANOGRAPHY WE UNDERSTOOD THAT TOPICS FOR JOINT COOPERATION LISTED IN REFTEL B WOULD BE REVISED INCORPORATING INDIAN PRIORITIES AND SUSCEPTIBILITIES. OCEANOGRAPHIC AGENCIES IN INDIA HAVE YET TO DETERMINE THE AREAS OF OCEANOGRAPHY ON WHICH THEY SHOULD COLLABORATE WITH US. ON AN OPTIMISTIC NOTE, WE ARE TOLD THAT THIS INFORMATION SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN A MONTH. IN LIGHT OF THIS WE PREFER THAT THE SUBJECT OF RESEARCH CLEARANCE ON US OCEANOGRAPHIC SHIPS SHOULD BE ON AN INFORMAL BASIS AMONG SCIENTISTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES AT THE WORKSHOP AND WE AGREE WITH YOU THAT THIS LOW KEY APPROACH IS PREFERABLE.

7. AS AN ADDED NOTE, THE WEST GERMANS ARE GIVING THE GOI A SOPHISTICATED OCEANOGRAPHIC RESEARCH VESSEL COSTING AROUND \$25 MILLION. DESHPANDE SAID THAT US SCIENTISTS WILL PROBABLY BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY THIS SHIP IN AND AROUND INDIAN WATERS.

8. EXAMPLES OF DIPLOMATIC NOTES ARE BEING POUCHED.
GOHEEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PORT CLEARANCES, OCEANOGRAPHIC RESEARCH
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NEWDE04123
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780116-0564
Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780366/aaaacdon.tel
Line Count: 113
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f44dcec6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 58024, 78 NEW DELHI 2948, 78 STATE A-579, 78 NEW DELHI 3454
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3324734
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RESEARCH VESSEL CLERANCE REQUEST
TAGS: TOCY, OCLR, TGEN, IN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f44dcec6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014